

PENNSYLVANIA WILDLIFE HABITAT INCENTIVE PROGRAM (WHIP)

1. State Objective

- Restore, enhance or establish fish and wildlife habitat on 2200 acres for species of concern, including fencing 35 miles of streams.
- Modify 275 landowner's attitudes about wildlife habitat on farms.
- Educate the local and general public about the benefits of this project.
- Identify priority areas within each county to make the most efficient use of program funds and partnership staffs.

2. State Wildlife Priorities

The focus of this Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) proposal in Pennsylvania is native grassland and riparian habitats on agricultural lands. Grassland species of wildlife are second only to wetland wildlife in their historical decline. Grassland nesting birds have experienced the most serious declines of any group of wildlife species in Pennsylvania over the past 20 years. Riparian habitats are unique in that both terrestrial and aquatic species are directly benefited. Both wetland and upland species of concern are benefited by restoring riparian habitats.

The U.S Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), The Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC), the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and The Nature Conservancy have all documented the decline of native grassland and riparian ecosystem in Pennsylvania. In addition, California University of Pennsylvania and Pheasants Forever have joined with FWS, PGC and the USDA, Natural Resource Conservation Service in a project to restore native grassland and riparian habitats in Pennsylvania.

The WHIP program will be statewide. Additional priority habitats are upland corridors (hedgerows), irregular block shrub plantings and small woodland openings.

<u>Problem Addressed</u>	<u>Habitat Type</u>	<u>Species Used</u>	<u>Practice Scope</u>	<u>Geographic Funding</u>	<u>Est.</u>
Declining Pop.	Grassland	Meadow Lark	Warm/ Seas Seedings	So 2/3 Penna	300,000
Limited Habitat	Riparian	Belted King fshr	Fencing& Planting	So 2/3 Penna	450,000
Limited Habitat	Upland Corridors	Various	Hedgerow Planting	So 2/3 Penna	100,000
Declining Pop.	Shrub land	Woodcock	Shrub Planting	State Wide	200,000
Limited Habitat	Shrub Land	Various	Small Clearings	No 1/3 Penna	150,000

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- Habitat for Species of Concern:

Grassland	Shrub land
Riparian	Small Woodland Openings
Upland Corridors	

- Species of Concern:

Bobolink	Barn Owl
Blue-winged teal	Brook trout
Delmarva fox squirrel	Eastern massasauga
Eastern meadow lark	Grasshopper sparrow
Henslow's sparrow	Kitland's snake
Least shrew	Loggerhead shrike
Northern bobwhite	Northern harrier
Regal frittilaria	Short-eared owl
Upland sandpiper	Vesper sparrow
Woodcock	Belted kingfisher
American kestrel	

Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program Field Ranking Form

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- I. Distance to Existing Habitat -- Check off if present (may include land owned by other)

☐ Grassland (≥ 10 ac.) ; ☐ Riparian ($\geq \frac{1}{4}$ mi .)
☐ Hedge grow ($\geq \frac{1}{4}$ mi .); ☐ Shrub Block (≥ 3 ac.)
☐ Woodland Opening (≥ 2 ac . .)

	<u>Woodland Opening</u>	<u>All Others</u>
0.25 mile	2	10
0.5 mile	5	5
1.0 mile	10	2

Grassland	Riparian	Hedgerow	Shrub Block	Woodland Opening	
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)	(10)	(Total)
					I.

- II. Habitat Improvement (on planned area) -- Record rating

Step 1. – Rate the existing habitat.

Grassland	0	1	2	3	-	-	<u> </u>
Native Grassland	-	-	-	3	4	5	<u> </u>
Other	0	1	2	3	4	5	<u> </u>
(Riparian, Hedgerow, Shrub or Woodland Opening)							

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Step 2. – Rate the planned habitat.

Grassland (mix)	0	1	2	3	4	-	<u> </u>
Native Grassland	-	-	-	3	4	5	<u> </u>
Riparian	0	1	2	3	4	5	<u> </u>
Hedgerow/ Shrub	0	1	2	3	-	-	<u> </u>
Native Hdg/ Shr	-	-	-	3	4	5	<u> </u>

☐ ☐

(Hdg) (Shr)

Woodland Opening 0 1 2 3 4 5 __

Step 3. – Subtract existing habitat rating, Step 1.) from planned habitat (rating, Step 2.) and multiply by 2.

Grassland	<u> </u>	X 2	=	<u> </u>	
	Rating			(10)	
Riparian	<u> </u>	X 2	=	<u> </u>	
	Rating			(10)	
Hedgerow	<u> </u>	X 2	=	<u> </u>	
	Rating			(10)	
Shrub Block	<u> </u>	X 2	=	<u> </u>	
	Rating			(10)	
Woodland	<u> </u>	X 2	=	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	Rating			(10)	(Total)
					II.

III. Size of area in Wildlife Habitat Development Plan (WHDP)

A. Grassland

≥ 20 acres	10	
15-19 acres	8	
10-14 acres	6	
5-9 acres	4	
≤ 5 acres	2	<u> </u>
		(10)

B. Riparian/ Hedgerow

≥ 0.5 mile	10	
0.25-0.5 mile	5	
≤ 0.25	2	
Riparian <u> </u>	Hedgerow <u> </u>	
(10)	(10)	

C. Shrub Block

≥ 5 acres	10	
3-5 acres	5	
1-2 acres	2	<hr/>
		(10)

D. Woodland Opening

4-5 acres	10		
2-3 acres	5		
≤ 2 acre (or >5 acres)	2	<hr/>	<hr/>
		(10)	(Total)
			III.